

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 5, 7 to 11 and 14 to 19 are in the application. Claims 6, 12 and 13 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein.

Claims 1, 11 and 14 have been amended and Claims 17 to 19 have been added. Claims 1, 11, 14, 18 and 19 are the independent claims herein.

Applicant's representative, Carole Quinn, wishes to thank Examiners Chang and An for their courtesies and thoughtful treatment extended during the December 10, 2002 personal interview and for Examiner An's subsequent telephone interview with Applicant's representative, Michael O'Neill.

It was agreed during the December 10, 2002 interview that the claimed invention distinguished over the prior art of record. Applicant has amended Claims 1, 11 and 14 and believes that these claims remain distinguished over the art of record, and that new Claims 17 and 19 are also distinguished over the applied art.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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APPENDIX

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE TO CLAIMS

1. (Amended) A method for negotiating an exchange of image processing functionality between first and second devices over a bi-directional communication link, comprising the steps of:

communicating a [exchanging] function [code] description[s] between the first and second devices, the function [code] description[s] including information concerning functionality [respectively] available in the first [and] or second devices;[, together with information concerning whether such functionality is exportable to other devices;]

negotiating an assignment of image processing functionality between the first and second devices, with the overall image processing functionality effecting an [efficient] image transfer between the first and second devices; and

transferring [exchanging] program code that implements image processing functionality between the first and second devices in a case where the negotiated assignment indicates that functionality in one of the first and second devices is needed by the other of the first and second devices, wherein the program code is executed by the other of the [first and second] devices.

11. (Amended) A network interface card for interfacing between a network and an image processing apparatus, the network interface card comprising:

a communicator [an exchanger] adapted to communicate [exchange] a function

description with an external device, the function description including information concerning functionality [respectively] available in the image processing apparatus or [and] the external device;

a negotiator adapted to negotiate an assignment of image processing functionality between the image processing apparatus and the external device; and

an exporter adapted to transfer [export] program code that implements image processing functionality to the external device for execution thereon in a case that the negotiated assignment of image processing functionality indicates that functionality is needed by the external device.

14. (Amended) An image processing apparatus comprising:

a communicator [an exchanger] adapted to communicate [exchange] function descriptions with the external device, the function descriptions including information concerning image processing functionality [respectively] available in the image processing apparatus or the external device;

a negotiator adapted to negotiate an assignment of image processing functionality between the image processing apparatus and the external device; and

an exporter adapted to transfer [export] program code that implements image processing functionality to the external device for execution thereon in a case that the negotiated assignment of image processing functionality indicates that functionality is needed by the external device.